

A Story 50 Years in the Making

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Kero Wack artwork for the new fan comic

By E. Elliott

An Unlikely Story

The details are sketchy, but at one time, a movie featuring Batman and Godzilla was a real possibility.

Following the success of King Kong vs Godzilla, Toho Co kicked around a number of ideas for the next Godzilla movie, including Frankenstein Meets Godzilla.

Close to the debut of the Batman TV series, Godzilla series writer, Shinichi Sekizawa, developed a treatment for Batman Meets Godzilla. According to John LeMay's book, "The Big Book of Japanese Giant Monster Movies: The Lost Films," this may have been as early as November, 1965.

It's possible that Sekizawa's treatment was part of a larger coordinated effort to market Batman to Japan. The TV series would launch in Japan in early 1966. A successful Batman manga and line of Japanese toys would also debut in 1966.



Batman Robot Toy (Japan 1966) from Chip Kidd's "Batman Collected"

Even if Sekizawa worked independently of the pending Batman invasion, we know that William Dozier, producer of the Batman TV series, gave the project ample consideration. Among Dozier's papers, collected at the University Of Wyoming, is an English version of the Batman Meets Godzilla treatment.

The Dozier Treatment

In the Dozier treatment, a mad scientist named Finster holds Japan ransom by threatening various weather catastrophes. Commissioner Gordon and his daughter Barbara are swept up in the plot when their passenger ship is pummeled by a tidal wave in Tokyo Bay. From there, it's only a call to Batman and Robin to set the story in motion.

Godzilla appears in the treatment as Finster's weapon. Turns out he wasn't actually controlling the weather but a giant, atomic monster. Godzilla gets to destroy large portions of Japan while the Dynamic Duo play catch-up with Finster.

The scenes between Batman and Godzilla are few but memorable, including a bullet train ripped apart by the monster.

We only have a few pages of the original Sekizawa treatment for comparison but it appears that the Dozier treatment at least uses Sekizawa's treatment as a starting point. For example both treatments revolve around a mad scientist named, "Finster." Sekizawa's influence on the Dozier treatment can also be seen by the treatment's many references to Japanese landmarks and traditions.

The Legacy

No one really knows why the project didn't go forward. Dozier had always intended to use Batman movies to offset the costs of the expensive TV series. So a Batman Meets Godzilla movie seems like a worthwhile pursuit.

The TV series itself suffered falling ratings eventually calling it quits in March 1968. An attempt to relaunch the show on another network was thwarted by the premature destruction of the show's expensive sets.

Toho moved onto other projects finding success with campier affairs such as 1967's Son of Godzilla.

Today, the project is one of fandom's great lost movies.

The 2020 Comic Book Adaptation

Fifty years after the TV show's cancellation, a group of fans are coming together to produce a comic book adaptation of the lost movie.

Using the original Dozier treatment, the team have created a roadmap for an action-packed story, spanning three books.

Stay tuned to this blog for art, interviews, and previews!

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The Project

Project Batzilla is a group of fans dedicated to resurrecting the lost Batman Meets Godzilla movie.

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